Who
Ching-Fan Sheu

When
Class meets Th. 16:10-19:00 at room 80211 Social Sciences Building

Office hours
By appointments

Prerequisite
Students are expected to be familiar with basic statistics and experimental methods in behavioral research.

Objectives
This course is a survey of current research on judgment and decision making. A comprehensive coverage of the entire field is neither possible nor desirable in a one-semester course. So we shall focus on fundamental issues and topics of interest to the participating students. The course materials are selected for their emphasis on the interplay of empirical evidence, theory, and practical implications. Students will come away from the course with an understanding of how research in judgment and decision making is conducted.

Textbooks
All course material will be made available via the course web page.

Requirements
Every student's course grade will be based directly on her or his overall course score. The student's score will be a weighted average of the scores earned on all course requirements. The weights used in computing such averages are listed below.

- Class participation: 20%
- Presentation: 50%
- Project: 30%

Administration
The course will be taught using a presentation and discussion format. For each topic one student will be chosen (at random without replacement) to be the discussion leader. The discussion leader should prepare copies of (typed) discussion questions and commentary on the assigned articles to be distributed in class. The commentary should be focused and short (about a couple of pages per article). It can contain a number of the following items: illustrations of the research questions, examples and counter-examples to support or refute the main points of the articles, methodological criticisms, related issues or relevant studies, scope and practical implications, and further research ideas or experiment proposals.

The commentary must be written and distributed by 5 PM the day before class.
Everyone is expected to have read the assignments and the commentaries thoroughly before coming to class. You are expected to be an active participant throughout the entire class and to contribute to the quality of the discussion. Please note that the frequency with which you speak in class is not a key criterion for effective class participation. The classroom should be considered a laboratory in which you can test your ability to convince your peers that you have approached complex problems correctly and that your approach will achieve the desired results. Criteria that are useful in measuring effective class participation include:

- Is the participant a good listener?
- Is there a willingness to participate?
- Do you know the material when called upon?
- Are the points that are made relevant to the discussion? Are they linked to the comments of others?
- Do the comments show evidence of understanding the concept, or are comments repetitions of facts without analysis and conclusions?
- Do comments clarify or build upon the important aspects of earlier comments and lead to a clearer statement of the issues being covered and the problems being addressed?

The questions above deal with the process of class participation. Of equal or greater concern is the content of what you say. Coming up with examples from everyday life which bear direct relevance to the topic under discussion is a good way to contribute. Even better if you provide a cogent analysis of the examples based on some conceptual framework.

Project

The project can be on any topic related to the subject matter of the course. It might be an experimental analysis following up an idea from the readings, verification of some empirical results in the studies, an application of the findings in emotion and cognition to some practical problem. An experimental study should involve at least 36 subjects. You are encouraged to cooperate with one of your fellow students on the project. A one-paragraph description of the project proposal (typed) should be submitted to the instructor for approval by midterm or earlier. You do not need to describe the details of the study, only the question that the study will address and how it might be conducted. If you fail to turn in the proposal on time, I will not comment on it. Without the instructor's approval the project may not be accepted toward your grade. The project report is due on the day of the Final. The report should not exceed 12 pages excluding figures and tables. The print format should be set to double-spaced, 12-point time-roman font, and one-inch margins at top, bottom, left, and right of the page.

Project will be graded on the following criteria:

- How well is the problem formulated?
- How well is the project executed?
- How well is the project presented, written and orally?
- How much is learned from the study?
- Class presentation and participation.

Without documented emergencies, permission will NOT be granted to individual students seeking to turn in late assignments, to take tests late, or to be excused from one or more course requirements. Any documentation for late work must be turned in with the late assignments within three working days of returning to the class.